



Public Invited to Celebrate 100 Years of Oklahoma's Transportation on Sept. 22 in Antlers

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Did you know...

- In October 1926, the SH-10 Hugo-Paris Bridge, the first free bridge built over the Red River, was completed in Choctaw County.
- In April 1945, a tornado hit the Highway Department's Division 2 Office in Antlers. A contract to rebuild the facilities was awarded later that year.
- In September 2005, U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta designated the SH-1/ Talimena Drive in southeastern Oklahoma as a National Scenic Byway.

These are just a few examples of the important moments in southeast Oklahoma's transportation history. In 1911, House Bill 318 created the State Highway Department. Since then, highways helped build the state's economy, bringing families closer together and making necessary goods and services available in ways likely never imagined in early-day Oklahoma.

This year, the Oklahoma Department of Transportation is highlighting the work of the past 100 years and sharing our transportation history by hosting a series of open houses statewide. As a way to show appreciation for their support, the public is invited to join ODOT employees at the Division 2 centennial celebration in Antlers on Thursday, Sept. 22. Events include a centennial plaque dedication and a hot dog lunch.

Copies of the new coffee table book, *ODOT100: Celebrating the First 100 Years of Transportation in Oklahoma*, will be for sale. This is a comprehensive look at the origins of transportation in our state, the challenges faced throughout the decades and the current accomplishments on topics such as interstates, bridges, waterways and rail. This limited-edition book includes many compelling stories and historic photos, and sells for \$25 plus tax at ODOT field offices statewide. (Check or credit cards only; no cash accepted).

Division 2 includes Atoka, Bryan, Choctaw, Latimer, LeFlore, Marshall, McCurtain, Pittsburg and Pushmataha counties. This open house is a great opportunity to learn more about the history and milestones made in transportation in Oklahoma, ask questions about area projects and meet the people who work to keep the highways and interstates safe. The Association of Oklahoma General Contractors, Association of County Commissioners of Oklahoma and Oklahoma Employees Credit Union are sponsors of this event.

ODOT Open House Centennial Celebration

Thursday, September 22

10:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Light lunch served 11:30 a.m.

Division 2 Headquarters, on US-271, two miles south of the US-271 / SH-3 junction in Antlers.

If you require special accommodations, please contact Division 2 Event Coordinator Cindy Akard at 580-298-3371. Additional information on the ODOT Centennial, including trivia, photos and events can be found at www.okladot.state.ok.us/odot100

---www.okladot.state.ok.us---



INFORMATION RELEASE

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Photo 1:



A view of downtown Antlers following a paving project. This work was part of the National Recovery Municipal project in the early 1930s.

Photo 2:



Convict labor was a cheap and available source in the early days of Oklahoma's road construction. In this photo, convicts are constructing SH-43 in Latimer County. There were no guards; the threat of going back behind "the walls" was enough to keep workers on the straight and narrow.